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FM AMEMBASSY ASTANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5152
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE 1486
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0864
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2268
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASTANA 000626

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, SCA/A, EUR/RPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/13/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: AMBASSADOR DELIVERS DEMARCHE ON
AFGHANISTAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO DFM ZHIGALOV

REF: A. STATE 31102

[1](#)B. ASTANA 0604

Classified By: Ambassador Richard E. Hoagland, Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) The Ambassador delivered reftel A demarche on the conclusions of our Afghanistan-Pakistan strategic review and requesting specific Kazakhstani contributions to Afghanistan to Deputy Foreign Minister Konstantin Zhigalov on April 13. He provided Zhigalov with non-papers on both issues, explaining that he had given them to Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Kairat Sarybay on April 8 (reftel B). The Ambassador pointed out that our request to Kazakhstan is in line with previous bilateral conversations. He noted in particular that in meetings in Washington and Kabul, Deputy Defense Minister Lt. Gen Bulat Sembinov had said Kazakhstan might consider deploying a military engineering team to Afghanistan as a third step in its military engagement, following deployment of a small number of staff officers to ISAF headquarters and a medical unit. The Ambassador asked for an official response to our request, in which we would welcome any other proposals Kazakhstan might have to assist Afghanistan.

[1](#)2. (C) Zhigalov promised Kazakhstan would provide an official response. He said that he was well aware of the plans to send Kazakhstani officers to ISAF and deploy a medical unit, but the proposal to deploy a military engineering team was "quite a new one" for him; he described it as something Kazakhstan should seriously think about. Zhigalov added that the Kazakhstanis are considering initiating a program to educate Afghans in Kazakhstan. He envisioned the program providing full multi-year university education, though the Ministry of Education still has to decide on the details, including the number of students, and the Kazakhstanis need to consult with the Afghan government on Afghanistan's specific needs. He explained that the Afghans might particularly welcome sending Afghan students to Kazakhstan because Kazakhstan is a fellow Muslim country and provided university education to Afghans during the Soviet period. Zhigalov expected that Kazakhstan would cover the costs of education and accommodation, but would look to other partners in Afghanistan to pay for transportation costs.

13. (C) COMMENT: In general, Kazakhstan is quite well disposed to help in Afghanistan because they know it is in their interests to do so. That a military engineering unit was "quite a new one" for DFM Zhigalov does not signify reluctance on his part. Rather, it's likely that he's simply not up to date on Deputy Defense Minister Sembinov's thinking. While our reftel A "ask list" for Kazakhstan includes a request for agriculture and water experts, their plan to offer full university education for Afghan students seems fairly well advanced, and should be considered seriously. END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND